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ABSTRACT

A survey of the status of language usage in Tanzania begins with an overview of the three levels of language use: (1) Swahili, the national and official language, used in public life; (2) English, used in international affairs and in technical and intellectual matters; and (3) the over 120 vernacular languages used in family and religious life, including Sukuma, Makonde, Chaga, Haya, Nyamwezi, Ha, Hehe, Gogo, and Nyakusa. Attention is given to Tanzania's role as a pioneer in establishing an indigenous rather than a colonial language as its official language, and language policy following from that point is examined. A matrix follows that rates these languages and vernaculars on: (1) their usage rating using State Department classifications; (2) increase and decrease trends by the year 2000; (3) chief of state use in addressing the populace; (4) use in armed forces, government, court, and diplomatic communications, written and oral; (5) use as a language of instruction or required language in higher education, on the secondary and elementary levels, and in adult education; (6) use in the popular press, radio and television broadcasting, and film; (7) business and professional use, written and oral; (8) use in intellectual circles; (9) the alphabet situation; (10) the status of indigenous literature; (11) use in public signs and notices; and (12) the availability of instructional materials and dictionaries in the native languages for use in English as a second language. Explanatory notes give the number and population percentages using the languages, the type of alphabet used, and specific instructional materials titles. A selected bibliography is also included. (MSE)

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COUNTRY STATUS REPORT:

TANZANIA

June 1984

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There are three levels of language use in Tanzania: Swahili, the national and official language since Independence, is used in public life. The colonial language, English, is used in international affairs and in technical and intellectual matters. The vernacular languages, of which there are over 120, are used in family and religious life. Vernaculars with an estimated speaking population of over 500,000 are Sukuma, Makonde, Chaga, Haya, Nyamwezi, Ha, Hehe, Gogo, and Nyakusa.

Tanzania was the first African nation to establish an indigenous language rather than a colonial language as its national and official language. Nyerere's socialist government has taken definite and relatively successful steps to ensure the development and use of Swahili as opposed to English on higher levels, and the vernaculars on lower levels, in all aspects of public life. Nearly all writers agree that this government effort has resulted in the firm establishment of Swahili as a language of prestige and national identity, and in its widespread use among Tanzanians on all social levels. One of the most notable practical implementations of government language policy has been a massive adult literacy campaign in Swahili: the adult illiteracy rate dropped from 67% in 1967 to 21% in 1982.

The success of the government's policy of establishing Swahili as Tanzania's single language can be attributed not only to government efficiency, but also to the language situation in the country. For historical reasons, English has not been so well established in Tanzania as it has been in other Anglophone African countries. Also for historical reasons, Swahili was well-established on the islands of Zanzibar and Pembe. The presence of so many vernaculars on the mainland makes it transparently impossible for practical reasons to implement any kind of multilingual language policy. Most important, the vernaculars spoken by well over 90% of the population are Bantu languages, very close in structure and pronunciation to Swahili, making Swahili easy for the majority of the population to learn. The imposition of Swahili therefore constitutes a real hardship for relatively few Tanzanians.

While the government has not actively inhibited the use of vernaculars, its policy of encouraging Swahili has had the effect of discouraging the vernaculars. The adult literacy campaign mentioned earlier was preceded by a directive to the effect that all adult education had to be conducted in Swahili. This had the effect of inhibiting missionary educational activity, which had previously been the major source of development of the vernaculars.

There is commentary on the part of knowledgeable people that Swahili still lacks the terminology it needs to become a language easy to use in technical and intellectual conversation. The Swahili Research Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam has attempted to develop Swahili vocabulary, and has apparently been successful; intellectuals report that Swahili is being used more and more in circumstances where English was formerly used.

In international African circles, Tanzania is regarded as a leader in the movement to adopt Swahili as an international African language. Kenya, for example, is considered to have followed Tanzania's lead in its recent adoption of Swahili as a national language with status equal to English.

TANZANIA

Languages

Factoids

1. Usage rating*
2. Increase/decrease
3. Chief of State use?
4. Armed Forces/written
5. Armed Forces/oral
6. Government/written
7. Government/oral, national
8. Government/oral, local
9. Court/written
10. Court/oral
11. Diplomatic use?
12. Higher education
13. Higher ed: required?
14. Secondary education
15. Secondary: required?
16. Primary education
17. Primary: required?
18. Adult education
19. Popular press use
20. Transmission across borders?
21. Use in radio broadcasting
22. Use in TV broadcasting
23. Use in film
24. Business/professional/written
25. Business/professional/oral
26. Use in intellectual circles
27. Alphabet situation*
28. Status of literature
29. Use in signs?
30. Teaching materials*
31. Bilingual dictionaries*

	Swahili	English	Sukuma	Makonde	Chaga	Haya	Nyamwezi	Ha	Hehe	Gogo	Nyakusa				
1	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4				
1	-	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3				
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	-	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0				
1	-	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				

Notes:

Matrix figures are explained on following pages

? = information unavailable within time frame of project

- = not applicable

* = footnotes on following pages

FOOTNOTES

1. 1984 ESTIMATES, NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPEAKERS

<u>Language</u>	<u>Number of native speakers</u>	<u>Percentage of population</u>
Swahili	127,100	.62%
English	-	-
Sukuma	2,644,500	12.9%
Makonde	820,000	4.0%
Chaga	758,500	3.7%
Haya	717,500	3.5%
Nyamwezi	697,000	3.4%
Ha	656,000	3.2%
Hehe	615,000	3.0%
Gogo	615,000	3.0%
Nyakusa	553,500	2.7%

27. TYPE OF ALPHABET USED

<u>Language</u>	<u>Alphabet</u>
Swahili	Roman
English	Roman
Sukuma	Roman
Makonde	Roman
Chaga	Roman
Haya	Roman
Nyamwezi	Roman
Ha	Roman
Hehe	Roman
Gogo	Roman
Nyakusa	Roman

30. TEACHING MATERIALS FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

<u>Language</u>	<u>Texts</u>
Swahili	Hinnebausch, Thomas and S. M. Mirza. <u>Kiswahili Msingi wa Kusema, Kusoma, na Kuandika</u> . Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979. Indakwa, John. <u>Swahili: Conversation and Grammar</u> . Buffalo, NY: Black Academy Press, 1972. Stevick, Earl et al. <u>Swahili Basic Course</u> . Washington, D.C.: Foreign Service Institute, Department of State, 1968.

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Tanzania - 4, Footnotes (cont.)

31. DICTIONARIES FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

<u>Language</u>	<u>Text</u>
Swahili	Rechenbach, Charles W. et al. <u>Swahili-English Dictionary</u> . Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1968.
	Johnson, Frederick. <u>A Standard Swahili-English Dictionary</u> [and] <u>A Standard English-Swahili Dictionary</u> . London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
	Jahadmy, Ali Ahmed. <u>Swahili-English Dictionary</u> Berkeley: University of California Press, 197?

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Polome, Edgar C. "Swahili in Tanzania"

Polome, Edgar C. "Tanzania: A socio-linguistic perspective"

Abdulaziz, Mohamed H. "The ecology of Tanzanian national language policy"

Kavugha, Douglas and Donald Bobb. "The use of language in the law courts of Tanzania"

Mbunda, Fulgens and David Brown. "Language teaching in primary schools"

Mbunda, Fulgens et al. "Language teaching in secondary schools"

Hill, C. P. et al. "Language teaching in higher education"

Hill, C. P. "Some developments in language and education in Tanzania since 1969"

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Explanation of Matrix Figures - a

1. Usage rating, using the State Department classifications
 - 1: Official language, most widely used.
 - 2: Official language, not most widely used.
 - 3: Widely used language, but not official. (Over 10% of population)
 - 4: Unofficial language used by significant minority (but less than 3)
 - 5: Unofficial language used by influential minorityFOOTNOTE: NUMBERS OF SPEAKERS, PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
2. Increase/decrease trends by the year 2000
 - 1: Number of native speakers will increase in proportion
 - 2: Number of native speakers will remain proportionally constant
 - 3: Number of native speakers will decrease in proportion
3. Chief of State use, in addressing populace: YES (1) NO (0)
4. Armed Forces written communications
 - 1: Only language used in official communiques
 - 2: One of the languages used in official communiques
 - 0: Not used in official communiques
5. Armed Forces oral communications
 - 1: Used on all levels
 - 2: Used among officers only
 - 3: Used among multi-lingual NCO's and troops
 - 4: Used among monolingual troops only
 - 0: Not used
6. Written government communications
 - 1: Only language used in official communications
 - 2: One of the languages used in official communications
 - 0: Not used in official communications
7. Oral government communications/national level
 - 1: Official language spoken in national assembly
 - 2: One of the official languages spoken in national assembly
 - 0: Not used in government
8. Oral government communications/local level
 - 1: Official language in local government
 - 2: One of the official languages used in local government
 - 3: Allowed in local government proceedings, translated into official language
 - 0: Not used in local government
9. Court use in written communications
 - 1: Only language used in official communications
 - 2: One of the languages used in official communications
 - 0: Not used

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Explanation of Matrix Figures - b

10. Court use in oral communications
 - 1: Only official language used in court
 - 2: One of the official languages used in court
 - 3: Allowed in courts, translated into official language(s)
 - 0: Not used in courts
11. Diplomatic use in notes to other countries: YES (1) NO (0)
12. Use in higher education
 - 1: Official medium of instruction
 - 2: Unofficial medium of instruction
 - 0: Not used
13. Language taught as subject in required courses in higher education:
YES (1) NO (0)
14. Use in secondary education
 - 1: Official medium of instruction
 - 2: Unofficial medium of instruction
 - 0: Not used as medium of instruction
15. Language taught as subject in required courses on secondary level?
YES (1) NO (0)
16. Use in primary education
 - 1: Official medium of instruction
 - 2: Unofficial medium of instruction
 - 0: Not used as medium of instruction
17. Language taught as subject in required courses on primary level?
YES (1) NO (0)
18. Language use in adult education
 - 1: Used in oral and written technical instruction
 - 2: Used in oral and written life skills instruction
 - 3: Used in oral life skills instruction
 - 4: Used in literacy classes only
 - 0: Not used in adult informal education
19. Language use in popular press
 - 1: Used in publications throughout country
 - 2: Used in centrally-based publications with national distribution
 - 3: Used only in regional and local publications
 - 4: Used in clandestine publications only
 - 0: Not used

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Explanation of Matrix Figures - c

20. Language used in radio/TV transmission across national borders?
YES (1) NO (0)
21. Language use in radio broadcasting
1: Language used broadcasting throughout country
2: Language used in centrally-based national broadcasts
3: Language used in local broadcasting only
3: Language used in clandestine broadcasting only
0: Language not used in radio broadcasting
22. Language use in TV broadcasting
1: Language used in telecasting throughout country
2: Language used in centrally-based national telecasting
3: Language used regional and local telecasting only
0: Language not used in TV
23. Language use in film
1: Language used in indigenous film-making
2: Foreign-language films dubbed/subtitled into language
0: Language not used in films
24. Business/Professional use - written
1: Sole official language in business and professional communications
2: One of the official languages in business and professional communication
0: Not used
25. Business/Professional use - oral
1: Used in trade and commerce throughout country
2: Used in national trade and commerce only
3: Used only in local trade and commerce
26. Language use in intellectual circles
1: Language used in indigenous scholarly publications
2: Language used in formal scholarly discussion
0: Language not used
27. Alphabet situation
1: Established standardized alphabet exists.
2: Alphabet developed, no standardization
3: Competing alphabets exist
0: No alphabet exists
FOOTNOTE: TYPE OF ALPHABET USED
28. Status of indigenous literature
1: Established written tradition exists
2: Literature tradition emerging
3: Popular literature exists
0: No written literature exists
29. Language used in official public signs, notices: YES (1) NO (0)

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Explanation of Matrix Figures - d

30. Teaching materials for English speakers

- 1: Wide range of teaching materials exists
- 2: Narrow range of teaching materials exists
- 0: No teaching materials exist

FOOTNOTE: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

31. Dictionaries for English speakers

- 1: Wide range of bilingual dictionaries exists
- 2: Narrow range of dictionaries exists
- 0: No dictionaries exist

FOOTNOTE: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY